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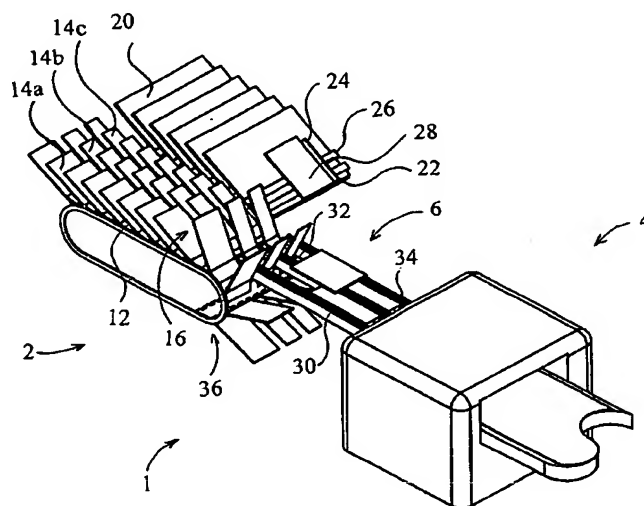
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— as to applicant's entitlement to apply for and be granted a patent (Rule 4.17(ii)) for the following designations AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES,

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(54) Title: APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR MERGING ITEMS TO BE SORTED



(57) Abstract: An improved merging apparatus (2) and method for merging items into a pre-sorted sequence of items is provided. The merging apparatus has a series of linked movable receptacles or bins (16) which correspond to the sorting bins (22) of a sorting machine in conjunction with which the apparatus can be used. Each sorting bin (22) and each corresponding movable bin (16) are allocated a location in a sort sequence. Following a sort, the sorted items of in the sorting bins are output into the linked moveable receptacles according to their position in the sort sequence. A user of the preferred merging apparatus (2) can enter the address data of items rejected in the sort into an input device connected to apparatus control means. The control means causes the linked movable bins to move such that the merging bin allocated the position in the sort sequence given by the address data entered by the user is brought to a position in which the user can insert the rejected item.

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- as to the applicant's entitlement to claim the priority of the earlier application (Rule 4.17(iii)) for all designations

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